

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 03024 011654Z

62

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 PPT-02 SCA-01 SY-10 L-03 OPR-02

SCS-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SS-20 NSC-10

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R 011503Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6571

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3024

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, UR, US

SUBJ: SOVIET REDUCTION OF TRAVEL CONTROLS.

1. ROMANIAN EMBOFF TOLD UK EMBASSY THAT IN ADDITION TO CIRCULAR NOTE ON TRAVEL RECEIVED BY OTHER MISSIONS, ROMANIANS WERE GIVEN ADDITIONAL NOTE EXTENDING THE REGIME FOR AMBASSADORS (NO NOTIFICATION FOR TRAVEL IN OPEN AREAS) ALSO TO MINISTER-COUNSELOR, COUNSELOR AND MILITARY ATTACHE, ON RECIPROCAL BASIS. ROMANIAN DID NOT KNOW WHETHER OTHER EAST EUROPEANS GOT THE SAME NOTE.

2. CHIEF OF PROTOCOL NIKIFOROV, IN CHANCE CONVERSATION WITH ITALIAN COUNSELOR AT AIRPORT, ASSERTED THAT FEB. 18 NOTE MERELY REPRESENTED FIRST STEP WHICH COULD BE FOLLOWED BY OTHER STEPS IF OTHER COUNTRIES RECIPROCATE. (WE HAVE IMPRESSION HOWEVER, THAT THIS WAS RATHER OFF-HAND REMARK RESPONDING TO ITALIAN'S ASSERTIONS THAT CHANGES ARE OF NO CONSEQUENCE.)

3. REPORTED OFFER TO ROMANIANS, IF TRUE, FURTHER
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 03024 011654Z

UNDERLINES THE SOVIET SHIFT AWAY FROM "NON-DISCRIMINATORY"

TO RECIPROCAL BILATERAL APPROACH TO TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS. THIS STRENGTHENS THE CASE FOR RECIPROCAL PROPOSALS BY U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES TO CARRY THE RELAXATION PROCESS FURTHER.

4. WE HAVE NOTED THAT SOME NATO EMBASSIES IN MOSCOW TEND TO WRITE OFF THE FEB. 18 NOTE AS HAVING NO SIGNIFICANCE WHATSOEVER. WHILE WE HAVE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT IT IS A MODEST STEP, WE HAVE ALSO POINTED OUT TO OUR COLLEAGUES THAT NOTE-FREE TRAVEL FOR AMBASSADORS WILL UNDERMINE ONE OF OUR PRINCIPAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATION OF TRAVEL CONTROLS: THE INDEFINITE CLOSURE "FOR REASONS OF A TEMPORARY NATURE" OF MANY POINTS IN THE USSR. IT MIGHT BE WORTH MASSAGING THIS POINT IN ANY FURTHER NATO DISCUSSIONS, ALONG WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING A STRICTLY RECIPROCAL APPROACH IN RESPONSE.

5. WE NOTE FROM WIRELESS FILE THAT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN FEB. 28 STATED THAT USG WOULD RECIPROCATATE. WE WILL NOW USE THIS LINE IN MOSCOW AS WELL.
STOESSEL

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